Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 075 Emily Dickinson
Elementary 03M075
735 WEST END AVENUE
MANHATTAN
NY, 10025

Principal: Robert O'Brien

Dates of review: Nov 25, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Ilene Altschul
# The School Context

P.S. 075 Emily Dickinson is an Elementary school with 607 students from 0K through grade 5. The school population comprises 25.40% Black, 53.00% Hispanic, 15.00% White, and 3.80% Asian students. The student body includes 13.70% English language learners and 22.60% special education students. Boys account for 54.20% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45.80%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 93.40%.

# School Quality Criteria

## Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1</strong> Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2</strong> Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2</strong> Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4</strong> Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2</strong> Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Celebration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

The majority of teachers are engaged in professional collaborations to improve content and strengthen student progress. Teachers take on leadership roles and are valued in the decision-making process that affect student learning.

**Impact**

As a result of teacher contribution in the structured inquiry-based meetings there is an increase in their instructional capacity and student progress.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teachers participate in a grade level team and a vertical team in math, English language arts (ELA), special education teams focused on universal design for learning (UDL), technology, dual language and English as a second language (ESL), school culture or adult learners. The grade teams focus on curriculum and data analysis. The vertical teams engage in action research across grade levels to determine recommendations for practice to increase student achievement. The results of the action research are shared with the school community.

- The dual language and ESL team were analyzing the data of a 5th grade dual language class and then shared out the trends. The purpose of the team is to identify the best practices to meet the needs of the English language learners (ELL) and determine if dual language program provides more effective support to the ELLs.

- Teachers state that meeting with their colleagues provides them with insight and best practices to teach all students. They expressed that their team work provides a sense of community and consistency. Teachers stated they felt supported by their colleagues and that all ideas were welcomed and valued.

- The math team has been analyzing the state test data and identified the trend with vocabulary impacting students’ understanding. As a result, the teams are recommending an increase on academic vocabulary in mathematics.

- Teams are facilitated by leaders which are rotated each year giving all teachers an opportunity to take on a leadership role. Principal states this process allows for greater teacher voice and an increase in responsibility. Teachers state that they create the agenda collaboratively. Teachers also affirmed that the administration supports their decisions such as developing a writing curriculum in grades kindergarten through grade 2, moving fraction unit earlier in the year, developing book lists, or developing a school-wide structure for all dual language classes.
Findings
While school leaders and faculty plan curricula that are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards across grade levels and ensure coherent instruction, there was limited evidence that the curricula is regularly reviewed and modified.

Impact
The limited refinements to the curricula and tasks are inhibiting all learners including English language learners and students with disabilities to be cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

• Teachers indicate that the grade teams are primarily used for curricula planning and ensuring coherent instruction across the grade. In ELA, the school is using the Core Knowledge program for grades kindergarten through grade two and Expeditionary Learning in grades three through five. All grades are using the Go Math curriculum. Principal stated that the social studies curriculum is embedded into the ELA units. Across classrooms on the same grade there was evidence of coherence. All fifth graders are currently reading Esperanza Rising and fourth graders are engaged in a unit about the Iroquois tribe.

• With support from consultants last year, adjustments were made in mathematics to increase problem solving. This work has been continued into the curriculum planning for this year to ensure that problem solving is the focus in the mathematics lessons. In ELA, the school has adjusted the curriculum to ensure that there is optimal time for guided reading and writing.

• Writing is an area of focus as the administration and teachers state there are limited opportunities within the Core Knowledge program to engage in writing across genres. In kindergarten through grade 2, the teachers have adopted a writing unit from Portland public schools. The ELA teacher team will evaluate the effectiveness at the end of the winter goal cycle.

• The school’s instructional focus around metacognition and students being able to articulate what they are working on and monitoring their own progress prepares the students with the academic and personal behaviors needed towards college and career readiness. The principal stated that particularly in mathematics, emphasis has been placed to provide the students with time to persist on a task and engage in productive struggle.

• Teachers state that they plan and modify the curricula primarily after reviewing the results at the end of the goal cycle or at the end of the school year, limiting the impact to increase achievement for all learners. For example, the second grade teachers identified the need to increase writing and searched for a curriculum. Currently they are using the Portland writing unit on non-fiction informational text writing “All About Books”. Fourth grade teachers discussed the need for coherence between the dual language classes and the other classes on the grade and decided to purchase “Dancing Home” in English and Spanish so all students will be engaged in the same text and unit. However, these refinements were primarily done at the end of the school year and therefore not ensuring that all students are cognitively engaged.
### Additional Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are informed by the Danielson framework with emphasis on questioning and providing supports to meet the needs of all students with multiple entry points.

**Impact**

Students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and producing meaningful work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms there is consistent evidence of the workshop model, with opportunities for students to turn and talk, and work with a partner or a small group. In addition, all teachers clearly indicate the WALT “We are learning to” and WILF “What I am looking for” and the students are aware of the expectations for each lesson.

- Across the majority of classrooms, teachers planned for small group instruction based on the needs of the students. There were supports provided through visuals, use of technology, charts, peer support and differentiated texts on same content. In a fourth grade dual language class, students were given a text according to their reading level with similar content. In addition, a student with limited English was given the text translated in Spanish to ensure access to the content.

- In most of the classes with two teachers, both teachers were actively engaged in teaching a small group of students. In a fifth grade class, one teacher was questioning students about the text “Esperanza Rising” and another teacher was working with the other half of the class on rereading the text, providing supports with the vocabulary and identifying the evidence to respond to similar questions. In a first grade class each teacher was working with a small group on developing their opinion about one of the stories read using charts or alphabet sound cards while the remainder of the class worked independently.

- In one class, as part of the human rights unit, students have been reading articles about school-age Mexican immigrants not being entitled to go to school in Long Island. In groups students responded to this issue from the point of view of a guardian, a tax paying resident, or an advocate for immigrant children. In another class, students were working in partnership and annotating the text about the gist of each paragraph. Through partnerships, leveled materials on the same topic, introduction of vocabulary and teacher support students are able to access the curriculum.
Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  Rating: Proficient

Findings
The school uses common assessments to determine student progress towards goals. Across classrooms teachers utilize the assessments and tasks to provide feedback to students.

Impact
Teachers are reviewing and analyzing assessment data to provide targeted feedback and make adjustments to the curriculum and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes common assessments such as Fountas and Pinnell running records, Go Math beginning of the year baseline assessment and unit assessments, and beginning of the year writing prompt. Student work is reviewed and teachers track student improvement through progress monitoring. The reading level data is used to determine guided reading groups. The baseline assessments are utilized to identify gaps in curriculum and areas for additional support.

- For each goal cycle, teachers assess the students’ ability to meet the Common Core Learning Standards from the units in reading, writing, math and social studies. For example, in third grade, one teacher identified that 52% of the students are able to ask and answer questions to understand the information from the reading. This data is also tracked and analyzed by grade and school-wide to identify the overall percentage of students meeting each standard. Teachers are able to track individual student's progress as well as groups of students and the whole class.

- Through the teacher teams, teachers dig deeper to analyze the student work and identify the strengths, areas of support and strategies that could be implemented. The math team reviewed the state data and identified the need to further develop the math vocabulary. The dual language team is in the process of analyzing the data from the State ELA, Spanish proficiency exam (ELE), and the reading levels in English and Spanish to identify the trends within each subgroup of English dominant, Spanish dominant, and bilingual students in order to identify best practices that can be used to address the needs of all dual language and ESL students.

- Student work is assessed using a grade specific rubric indicating the expectations for the task. Students state that the feedback provided by the teacher helps them do better on their next essay. Rubrics are standards based and provide students with “a glow and a grow.”
Findings
School leaders and staff establish a culture for learning that conveys high expectations. Teachers communicate these expectations and progress to the students and families to ensure college and career readiness.

Impact
As a result, teachers are accountable to the success of their students leading to increased achievement as evidenced by an increase of 4% on the state ELA and exceeding the target in student achievement in the school quality guide. In addition, students are prepared for the next grade level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate their expectations through professional development and observational feedback. The administration developed a checklist of expectations in instructional practices to ensure consistency. Teacher's observation reports provide evidence for the rating aligned to the Danielson framework as well as next steps to continue to develop teacher practices around the instructional focus of questioning and using assessment in instruction. The professional development calendar indicates the topics for the sessions, the targeted audience and the goals of each session aligned with the instructional focus.

- Teachers state that the administration is transparent with their expectations and the instructional focus. They also stated that if they needed support, the principal would provide the professional learning opportunities or provide consultants. For example, teachers received professional development with consultants to adapt the Go Math curriculum to increase the rigor.

- Through the “Meet the Teacher Night” at the beginning of the school year, teachers and administration articulated the content and the academic and personal expectations. Students and teachers discuss the traits of persistence, engagement, work habits, communication and collaboration skills and self-regulation. Teachers meet with parents during the parent engagement time but have also shifted one of the sessions to the morning to accommodate working parents. During these meetings, teachers share the student data, assessments and goals.

- Parents state the school sets high expectations. Parents are familiar with their child’s reading level and their personal goals. They were all in agreement that the school has open communication and the teachers are easily available to discuss their child’s progress.